



Student Fee Board

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 4/28/23

Topic: Public Meeting

Present:

- **Voting members:** Lawrence Miller, Xiaoru (Tony) Shi, Jada Quinland, Yidi Wang, Brian Johnson, Conor Kelly, Ava Philips, Najee Rodriguez, Sydney Gibbard, Dallas Zebrowski, Cierra Chandler
- **Nonvoting members:** Alexa Clayton, Jolinda Wilson, Barry Bram

Absent:

- **Voting members:** Zander Golden
- **Nonvoting members:**

Agenda:

I. Call to Order and Opening Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

Motioned, seconded.

III. Adoption of the Minutes (April 21st, 2023)

Motioned, seconded.

IV. Public Comment

V. Topics of Discussion

A. 2023-2024 Fee Recommendation

Sarah Thorndike: Senior Vice President for Finance and Business/Treasurer

Andrea Dowhower: Vice President of Penn State

Jolinda Wilson: Senior Director for Administrative Services

Lawrence Miller: I will send over Excel with per student fee and 2023-2024 allocation. Everything in green are increases to fee. Everything in orange are decreases.

Starting with Bryce Jordan Center, we are recommending \$200,000. They requested \$225,000, but we've had concerns. Last year's board recommended a student advisory board, which has yet to be created.

Campus Recreation. Recommending \$5,145,309. Excited to see everything that's happening with them as they continue to service campus.

Center for Performing Arts. \$185,000 for ticket subsidy and \$50,000 for opportunity fund. People are taking advantage of opportunities created by CPA.

Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity. \$156,047.36.

CCSG. \$5,000, goes towards fixed annual allocation.

CAPS. \$1,098,717. \$11.13 per student. To cover wages. Think CAPS is doing great work.

Childcare Subsidy. \$206,362. \$1.04 per student. We are in Year 3 of cost-sharing model with general funds.

Gender Equity Center. Also requested flat funding. \$117,181. \$1.19 per student. They are good stewards with our money.

GPSA. \$59,542.

HUB Reserve. \$200,000, what we give them every year.

Lion's Pantry. \$196,700. We are recommending working with University to see alternative means of funding, considering Lion's Pantry serves faculty and students.

OGEEP. \$197,915. \$2 per student. To hire a new student advocacy manager. This office tows the line between in-class and out-of-class experiences.

Sarah Thorndike: Is this something students will support every year?

Lawrence: Everyone around the table agreed this is good for students. There haven't been too many concerns. With two-year cycle out, there may be wiggle room, but interested in seeing what they can do with this.

PRCC. \$206,000. Supportive of what they're able to do. What they're working on advances our values.

PRCC Staffing and Program Enhancement. \$403,500. Hiring for-community educators. Support for underrepresented members of our community. Looking for how can we do cost sharing in years to come.

Student Disability Services. They requested \$0 and are being allocated \$0. Due to hiring freeze. They will be submitting again next year.

Student Farm. Requested increase to \$230,166. Appreciative of their efforts to combat food insecurity efforts.

Student Legal Services. \$545,000. Rent increased. Would like to see them continue the good work they're doing.

Student Leadership & Involvement. \$2,055,079. Excel has a breakdown based on offices. We are separating student activities and student involvement. SPA is main source of increase due to rising concert costs. We request they come back and speak with us to see if they're on track in spending their allocation.

Student Orientation and Transition Programs. Recommending decrease to \$100,000. While we recognize what they've been doing, they've had a trend in having an excess of \$7,000. We recognize SOTP has an important role in this campus.

Sustainability Institute. They requested and we are supporting a decrease to \$75,600. \$0.77 per student. They are moving towards virtual programming.

UHS (STI Testing). Requesting and we are allocating \$370,000. This is an initiative that has been piloted for the past 2 years. We are confident this is a good use of student funding.

UPAC. \$4,600,000.

UPUA: \$139,629. Want to see more emphasis on fee board values, like accessibility and sustainability.

Moving onto new fee requests.

UHS. \$3,014,580. \$30.51 per student. Covering in-house labwork, EMS training, emergency transport, medical clearance, administrative form reviews, case management. We think this would be great to combat healthcare insecurity.

Organic Materials Processing and Education Center Expansion. \$2,300,000, a 2-year commitment. They will be using \$1,150,000 per year. This is something a lot of students have shown support for.

Andrea Dowhower: How has the group discussed the impact of this new fee request?

Lawrence: It supports one of our values - sustainability. This is something we think students' ability to enjoy campus for longer. Seen hundreds of emails of support. Right now, we have biodegradable materials, but we cannot compost them because we don't have the facilities. This expansion is going to work to make this a reality.

Andrea Dowhower: How does this impact out-of-class experience?

Brian Johnson: Two things. Composting idea relieves climate anxiety, which student body is largely concerned with. Allows opportunities for student body to participate.

Andrea Dowhower: That's helpful, and I would include that in here. Emphasizing where you found this and how this supports the out of class experience.

Lawrence Miller: Basic Needs Support Center. \$290,500. Made an agreement last year to fund this year.

Next, Environmental Sustainability Fund Requests. We give this fund \$250,000 per year. Any money not utilized becomes carry forward.

Only have one project for environmental sustainability fund: Zero Emissions Fleet. \$125,000.
Fully supports mission of ESF.

Next, Equity Fund. We give this fund \$400,000. DEI Community & Belonging Educators - \$200,000. Graduate Student Community Space. \$184,750. One-time. Changing of one of the spaces no longer used in the College of Engineering into a graduate student space. Free Menstrual Product Access. \$309,500. One-time. Pollock Halls Pilot Subsidized Laundry Program. \$27,000. Partnership with HFS. Provides LionCash vouchers for participants.

Equity Fund and Environmental Sustainability Fund do not impact the student fee.

Sarah Thorndike: What is the source of this?

Jolinda Wilson: This is a portion of fund balance. It sits within Student Affairs. \$400,000 is added every year.

Lawrence: Facilities Debts. \$268,959. End date is 2037-2038. \$3.80 per student per semester.

Facilities Reserve. \$4,302,818. To be used for HUB Expansion and Wellbeing Building.

Andrea Dowhower: You have enough money to conduct studies, not do projects.

Lawrence: Right now, we have contributed roughly \$30,000,000.

Jolinda Wilson: There is \$30,000,000 in controller's office.

Sarah Thorndike: Last year, the assumption of reserves fees would be at that level. If you're going to commit less to facilities reserves, there is less money to do projects.

Tony Shi: Last year, we didn't make a decision, and we're waiting on progress on feasibility studies. That's why this wasn't a big topic for this year's board.

Lawrence Miller: This year, we wouldn't want to spike fee, so we decided to use facilities reserve. Spreading it out since we don't know feasibility studies.

Tony Shi: Using this as a temporary buffer to offset spike in allocations. Next year, we'll recover to original contribution.

Lawrence Miller: Final recommendation is to set student fee to \$277. The 2024 Summer fee is as it has been in past (75%, 50%, 25% model).

We'll collect around around \$26M in funds. Total Funds allocated is around \$27M. Usage of carryforward reserve is around \$1M.

For the 2024-2025 fee recommendation, we are recommending \$280 per student per semester. Total to be collected is around \$26M. Total Funds expected to be allocated is around \$28M. Usage of carryforward reserve is \$1.65M.

Sydney Gibbard: Leaning out of facilities reserve. HUB Expansion and Wellbeing Building. My understanding HUB Expansion is \$10M.

Barry Bram: Another expansion is more. 3rd floor renovation is \$10M.

Sarah Thorndike: Also 20% increase in fees.

Sydney Gibbard: Not cutting into existing reserves, but contributing less.

Sarah Thorndike: Dependency every year on carry forward is a concern. More and more requests, and recurring requests. Whether you can increase fee fast enough, when you're using carry forward. What you're contributing is what you should get benefits of.

Andrea Dowhower: Things like compostable project should come from carry forward as that's one-time. Carry forward should not be used for recurring costs. Anticipate 3% increase - that's an \$8 increase. Wondering if \$3 and \$3 is too conservative.

Lawrence Miller: Carry forward - should be using. One of our main initiatives is to use money in the year it is collected.

Andrea Dowhower: Facilities has never been set up for that way. Students before you helped to contribute to the HUB for students to enjoy in the future.

Sarah Thorndike: Maxing out student fee. Nervous about carry forward.

Andrea Dowhower: CFB went with 5% increase. Longer conversation for future years. Fee boards being more parallel.

Sarah Thorndike: Thinking about debt service, which would also increase fee. Would recommend increasing the fee so that it's not such a dramatic increase in the future.

Tony Shi: Two questions. University has had several ongoing renovations. Would that be University's priority to start new, physical building projects in the next few years?

Sarah Thorndike: Board next week will see 5 year fiscal plan. Right now, renovations are mainly infrastructure. No University funding support for types of projects you all have been looking at. University will not have money for it and would not contribute. My worry is that this is eroding what the board wanted to do last year.

Andrea Dowhower: That's why facilities fee was created in the first place.

Sydney Gibbard: Do you want fee board to have more deliberations and recommend something new? I know composting will be primarily be funded by carry forward. Then increasing fee because we'd be increasing facilities fee. But feel like OMPEC is facilities.

Sarah Thorndike: Should come from facilities reserves or carry forward.

Sydney Gibbard: Do you have an opinion about how we transition UHS fee away?

Sarah Thorndike: Rare we don't support SFB's decisions. Would recommend that SFB increases student fee, given considerations.

Lawrence Miller: As it currently stands, we're at \$277 and \$280.

Sarah Thorndike: Think you can increase fee and contribute more to reserve. Doesn't put next year's board in a place of - doing something dramatic or cutting something students are accustomed to having.

Lawrence Miller: We'll be doing 10 minutes of talking through what we've done today.

Sydney Gibbard: My recommendation would be to fund OMPEC by carry forward and increase the fee based on adjustment to facilities reserve.

Tony Shi: Their main argument is we shouldn't reduce contribution to facilities reserve.

Brian Johnson: They don't want us to be as reliant on carry forward.

Lawrence Miller: Do we want to change fee? Seeing majority. What do we want to change it to?

Najee Rodriguez: Would we channel into another reserve?

Lawrence Miller: Functioning at a deficit, but take it less out of a reserve.

Barry Bram: UHS fee is about \$30 per student. At some point, that money has to be accounted for.

Sydney Gibbard: In this spreadsheet, it look like OMPEC is \$2.3M. Are you talking about end number of the fee?

Jolinda Wilson: Think it's important to have higher increase in your fee. It is going to be a reckoning some day. \$30 is a huge amount to recover. I'm not so concerned about use of carry forward. I think it's reasonable to want to use that. I would say \$10.

Brian Johnson: I would lean towards \$7.

Cierra Chandler: I'm okay with \$10. It's an increase regardless. Rate is what we can continue to discuss.

Barry Bram: Next year's board can think long-term.

Lawrence Miller: Where do we want OMPEC to come out of?

Tony Shi: Carry forward.

Lawrence Miller: Make a recommendation for next year. Carry forward is ~\$1.8M. \$281 this year and \$289 next year. We're going to vote now.

Yay: 9

Nay: 1

Abstain: 2

Lawrence Miller: Are we still comfortable with taking UHS Basic Health Fee from facilities reserve?

Jolinda Wilson: Source is not going to matter.

B. Student Fee Board Vote on 2023-2024 Chair

Barry: Two things we'll be doing today: electing chair and steering committee members.

Lawrence: Previous UPSFB Chair. Incoming GPSA President.

Cierra: 4th year Material Science PhD. GPSA Appointee.

Dallas: Dual JD/Master's of International Affairs

Andrew: 3rd Year Finance Student. Alternate

Fiona: Incoming UPAC Chair.

Zeina: At-Large Representative.

Jennifer Saunders: Incoming financial liaison for this board and Student Affairs

Nora: 3rd Year. UPUA President.

Giselle: 2nd Year. UPUA Vice President.

Sophia: UPUA Appointees.

Brian: 2nd Year. At-Large Representative.

Conor: 3rd Year. At-Large Representative.

Tim: At-Large Representative.

Najee: 4th Year. At-Large Representative.

Barry: Faculty advisor to UPSFB. Oversee elections of chair. Currently, Najee is the only one to submit an interest as chair.

Najee: I will be presenting my platform today. Experience consists of UPUA, SFB, SUAP, and Lion Ambassadors. Mostly in the basic needs realm. \$60M, including reserves. It's important we are good stewards of money. Two values: fiscal responsibility and ethical responsibility. We can establish a future for the fee board that is sustainable, and establishing what is right for students. Enrollment cliff that is upcoming - deficit of students we can pull from. Prepare now for upcoming students to enjoy their out of class experience. Did research about other student governments. They have a treasurer who helps facilitate financial modeling, analysis, reports, auditing. You can see the importance of what the fee is. Want to ensure there is an extended legacy. Autonomy over, and something we should push forward this year. Important we can navigate our fiduciary responsibilities. Also included general proposals - first-year committee for example. Any questions?

Brian: Was a concern this previous session regarding your attendance. To what end can you assure this board about your accountability?

Najee: Listed in the beginning of my introductory in taking accountability of that. Since then, putting in effort and getting prepared for next year, given circumstances. This is my priority. Last year, put in work of restructuring handbook, equity fund.

Lawrence: You are part of a secret society on campus. Concern of whether they are functioning best off of what's best for students.

Najee: Lion's Paws. A group of impassioned leaders. I'm an alum now. My priority is always with students.

Tim: What's your plan to delegate goals and initiatives to the rest of the fee board, given policy proposals?

Najee: Ultimate goal is standardize operations. Nothing will be implemented until discussion is occurring. Want to introduce, at least the concepts. Important to make sure workload doesn't fall on you all. Hoping to fill in any deficits you all might experience in this. Goal is to make this a more efficient process.

Barry: Discussion. Thoughts about his candidacy.

Brian: He has a good track record, speaks well. Think he can commit to SFB. Attendance came into concern this year. But see no issue if he is committed for next year.

Fiona: Based on previous meeting, proposals are really in line with last meeting. Confident he will be able to enact a lot of what he says, with past fee members in mind.

Barry: Created a ballot, will send to your Teams.

Congratulations Najee, you are now chair. The vote was 8 in favor and 1 abstention.

We'll have a summer meeting to determine steering committee, along with orientations.

Najee: Would just like to say thank you so much. Done lot of research, and hope I can be a good support system for you.

VI. Comments for Good of the Order

VII. Closing Roll Call

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.